



pennsylvania

OFFICE OF VICTIM ADVOCATE

Giving Crime Victims a Voice

Courage • Strength • Resilience

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 25, 2018

Response to Catholic Archdiocese Stay of Grand Jury Report

Harrisburg, PA – For decades, these brave survivors have suffered vial acts of sexual violence, abuse and grooming at the hands of various priests, as well as the institutions who chose to protect them. They have been lied to, manipulated, controlled and silenced on multiple levels.

The release of this grand jury report will feel like the unlocking of a cage that many of them have been trapped in for far too long. For various legal reasons, the individual survivors cannot yet speak out themselves. My office is working with a group of survivors who are eagerly awaiting the release of this report, and the day that they are no longer imprisoned by this culminating piece of control the church has on them. They want the freedom they have longed for to be able to face this giant and expose their perpetrators.

The delay of this report has added yet another layer of re-victimization on top of decades of trauma, anxiety, fear and anger. Justice has been delayed for too long. The stall tactics being used right now are nothing more than cowardly – a further extension of the abuse of power and control that these institutions have wielded over survivors for decades.

What has been underestimated, however, is the power and resiliency of these remarkable survivors. Accountability is coming. And we stand eagerly with these valiant survivors.

The Pennsylvania Office of Victim Advocate urges the swift release of the grand jury report and, in doing so, the release of these survivors from the pain of secrecy and shadow.

The Office of Victim Advocate can provide the following resources to your community or congregation:

- *facilitated discussion, with respect to your faith, around sexual assault and/or child abuse*
- *guest speakers, including survivors, who will share their wisdom*
- *a [printable resource](#) for your use*
- *connection with local resources in your county*

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MEDIA CONTACT:

Please find attached two graphics for your use with quotes directly from those impacted by this report. These survivors are not yet allowed by law to comment publically, therefore, have asked the Victim Advocate to serve as their spokesperson. For comment or questions, contact Jennifer Storm, Commonwealth Victim Advocate, directly at 717.756.9741 or jstorm@pa.gov.

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